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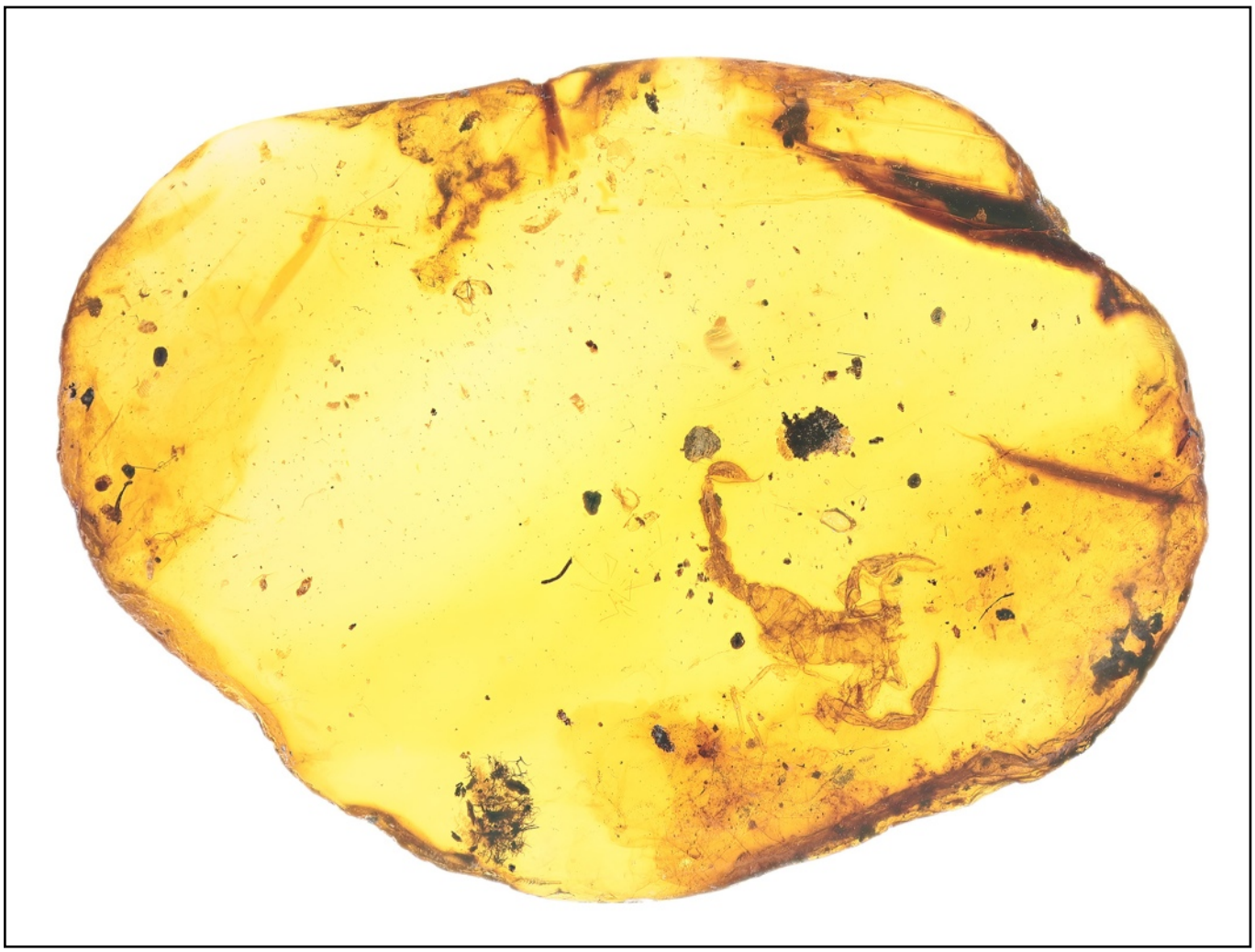

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Description of a second species for the genus *Serratochaerilobuthus* Lourenço, 2024 (Scorpiones: Chaerilobuthidae)

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Keywords:

Scorpiones; Chaerilobuthidae; *Serratochaerilobuthus*; *barbarae*; taxonomy; new species; description; variability; Burmite.

Abstract. – A new species is described for the genus *Serratochaerilobuthus* Lourenço, 2024. The description of this new species brings further evidence for the validity of the genus and confirms the family Chaerilobuthidae as one of the most speciose groups among those known from Early Cretaceous Burmite.

Lourenço W. R. & Velten J., 2025. – Description of a second species for the genus *Serratochaerilobuthus* Lourenço, 2024 (Scorpiones: Chaerilobuthidae). *Faunitaxys*, 13(10): 1 – 6.

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Introduction

Since the first description of a scorpion found in Early Cretaceous amber from Myanmar (or Burmite), the elements of the family Chaerilobuthidae Lourenço & Beigel, 2011 proved to be among the most speciose groups (Lourenço, 2002; Lourenço & Beigel, 2011). The family Chaerilobuthidae was originally based on a single new genus *Chaerilobuthus* Lourenço & Beigel, 2011; this situation remained unchanged until the creation of a second new genus for this family, *Chaeriloiurus* Lourenço, 2020 (Lourenço & Velten, 2020). This last genus remained however, somewhat enigmatic; consequently, it is considered for the moment as *incertae familiae* until new elements, based on complementary studies may be available (Lourenço & Velten, 2024a). In another recent publication (Lourenço & Velten, 2024b) one more new genus, *Serratochaerilobuthus* Lourenço, 2024, was created within the family Chaerilobuthidae. In this contribution a second new species belonging to the genus *Serratochaerilobuthus* is described. The description of this new species brings further evidence about the validity of the genus *Serratochaerilobuthus* and, once again, confirms the high degree of scorpion diversity in the Burmese amber-producing forests (Lourenço, 2023).

Material and methods

The specimen investigated is preserved in a clear oval-shaped piece of reddish-yellow amber that measures 27 x 21 mm and is about 3 mm thick. The scorpion is almost totally complete and has a moderate global size with a total length of 9.06 mm; only a few structures were damaged or seem to be absent such as the chelicerae. Most of the other remained characters are globally visible and allow a precise investigation in both dorsal and ventral aspects. A number of syninclusions are also present mainly composed by Arachnida, possible Opiliones, vegetal debris and dust. The schematic drawings provided are an interpretation of what was observable. Illustrations and measurements were produced with the aid of a Wild M5 stereomicroscope equipped with a drawing tube (camera lucida) and an ocular micrometre. Measurements follow Stahnke (1970) and are given in mm. Trichobothrial notations are those of Vachon (1974). Other morphological terminologies mostly follow Hjelle (1990). Trichobothria are definitely recorded when their bothria (areoles) can be observed, but the presence of other trichobothria is suggested by the observation of thin hairs. Considering the morphologies of pedipalps, telson and especially the pectines the scorpion is most certainly an adult male.

Taxonomic treatment

Family **Chaerilobuthidae** Lourenço & Beigel, 2011

Genus ***Serratochaerilobuthus*** Lourenço, 2024

Serratochaerilobuthus barbarae sp. n.

(Fig. 1-9)

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Holotype. – Most certainly an adult male. Type locality and horizon: Myanmar (Burma), Kachin; precise locality unknown; Lower Cretaceous.

Patronym. – The specific name honors Mrs Barbara Velten (Kirchheimbolanden, Germany) who always supported our studies.

Reviewer: Eric Ythier (*BYG Taxa*, *France*) - ZooBank: https://zoobank.org/06FD0852-A88E-49E5-B8E6-E1494B86C4E1

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Depository. – The type specimen is deposited in the collections of Mrs Barbara Velten (Kirchheimbolanden, Germany).

Diagnosis. – A mediun global size compared to the other species of the family Chaerilobuthidae with a total length of 9.06 mm for a possible adult male. The specimen is somewhat bulk with metasoma and pedipalps short; relationship between chela length vs chela width equal to 3.81 (Lourenço & Velten, 2022). Carapace not emarginated anteriorly, but straight with the presence of a small convexity; median eyes absent and presence of maculae in the place of lateral eyes. Two spinoid apophysis present in the internal aspect of patella. One pecten can be well observed; reduced with 6 teeth; fulcra absent; sternum pentagonal and conspicuous, slightly wider than long; genital operculum with two very flattened oval plates; spiracles small and slightly oval to rounded in shape. Chelicerae not observed; possibly retracted under the carapace. Telson with a largely bulbous vesicle with a thin and long aculeus; presence of a marked spinoid granulation over the metasomal carinae forming serrulas; fixed and movable fingers of the pedipalps with 7-8 series of granules separated by stronger spinoid accessory granules; tarsi of legs with long and sharped ungues. Trichobothrial pattern similar to that of Chaerilobuthidae in general but one or two extra trichobothia can be observed on the ventral aspect of chela; other trichobothria observed are: dorsal and 4 external trichobothria on the femur; 2-3 dorsal, 1 internal and 4-5 external on the patella; 2-3 dorsal, 2-3 external and 3-4 ventral on chela hand and 4-5 on fixed finger.

Description

Coloration. – The scorpion is reddish-yellow to brownish-yellow with some dark reddish zones; carapace yellowish; tergites and sternites brownish-yellow; metasomal segments brownish; telson reddish-brown to reddish-yellow; pedipalps reddish-yellow to reddish-brown; legs yellow. Ventral aspect slightly paler than dorsal aspect; pecten yellowish-brown.

Morphology. – Carapace without granulations; almost smooth; anterior margin straight with a small convexity. Carinae and furrows absent. Median ocular tubercle totally absent; median eyes absent; presence of maculae in the place of lateral eyes. Sternum pentagonal and conspicuous, slightly larger than long. Mesosomal tergites not granular as carapace and with vestigial carinae; VII with four vestigial carinae. Only one pecten is observed; small and with 6 teeth; fulcra absent; the zone with peg sensillae can be observed on some teeth. Sternites can be roughly observed since they partially suffered with the mummification process; almost smooth, with spiracles small and oval to rounded in shape. Metasomal segments I to IV with 10-10-8-8 observable carinae; segment V with 5 carinae; dorsal carinae on segments I-V with strong spinoid granules forming serrulas; ventral carinae on segments I-V equally with strong spinoid granules; setation on segments I to V weak. Telson with a strongly bulbous vesicle and a long but moderately curved aculeus; globally weakly granular to smooth but with minor spinoid granulations on ventral carina; setation moderately marked. Cheliceral dentition not observed. Pedipalps moderately elongated; femur pentacarinate with some spinoid granules on internal face; patella with dorso-internal, ventro-internal, dorso-external, external and ventral carinae; two spinoid apophysis on internal face. Chela with moderately to weakly marked carinae; all faces weakly granular to smooth; internal face with some spinoid granules. Fixed and movable fingers with 7-8 series of moderate granules separated by stronger spinoid accessory granules; extremity of fingers with one stronger spinoid granule. Trichobothriotaxy: a trichobothrial pattern related to those of both buthoid and chaeriloids, types A and B can be observed (Vachon, 1974); for details see diagnosis. Leg tarsi with a few long and thin ventral setae. Long and sharped ungues. Pedal spurs present and weakly marked; tibial spurs absent.

Morphometric values (mm), holotype of *Serratochaerilobuthus barbarae* **sp**. **n**.

– ***Total length*** (including telson) 9.07.

– ***Carapace***
length 1.27;
anterior width 0.94;
posterior width 1.34.

– ***Mesosoma*** length 2.14.

– ***Metasomal segments***
I: length 0.54, width 0.74;
II: length 0.61, width 0.61;
III: length 0.61, depth 0.47;
IV: length 0.81, depth 0.54;
V: length 1.54, depth 0.54.

– ***Telson*** length 1.55.

– ***Vesicle*** depth 0.54.

– ***Pedipalp***
femur: length 1.10, width 0.47;
patella: length 1.27, width 0.41;
chela: length 1.94, width 0.51;
movable finger length 1.14.

Relationships. – In account of the presence of serrulas on the metasomal carinae and the marked granulations on the pedipalp fingers, the new species can be placed in the genus *Serratochaerilobuthus*. The new species represents the second one for this genus but can be distinguished from *S. schmidti* Lourenço, 2024 by a number of features:

(**i**) presence of maculae in the place of lateral eyes;
(**ii**) internal face of pedipalp femur without any apophysis;
(**iii**) anterior margin of carapace straight with a minor convexity;
(**iv**) presence of two extra trichobothria on the ventral face of chela.

Comments on some recent taxonomic decisions concerning the family Chaerilobuthidae

After finalizing the present note, we became aware of a recent publication by Xuan et al. (2025). In this study, the authors propose several taxonomic changes regarding the families Chaerilobuthidae and Pseudochactidae Gromov, 1998, with which we disagree based on specific morphological and phylogenetic considerations. We find it necessary to address these points and present an alternative classification for these familial groups.

It is important to recall that in a recent paper (Lourenço & Velten, 2025), we previously noted that the study group led by Xuan et al. does not appear to have extensive experience in scorpion taxonomy or even in scorpion biology. Their previous publications also suggest an influence from neontologists, who typically have limited experience with amber fossils. It seems that these neontologists were directly involved in the recent publication (Xuan et al., 2025), although the analysis appears to have been based primarily on their own examination of the available material.

Several of their taxonomic decisions appear controversial and seem biased, as they rely on ambiguous reasoning. This approach results in contradictions that appear to undermine our previous publications. Given the extensive scope of their paper, we will focus on a few representative examples.

Xuan et al. (2025) strongly criticize our previous descriptions of species within the family Chaerilobuthidae, arguing that they were based on unreliable characters. It is important to acknowledge that diagnoses and descriptions of scorpions preserved in amber are often incomplete. The decision to describe a new taxon largely depends on the rarity of the specimen, and this practice is widely adopted by other authors, who have described new taxa based on highly fragmentary specimens simply because they represented significant novelties (e.g., Lourenço, 2002; Santiago-Blay et al., 2004, 2022; Xuan et al., 2022, 2023).

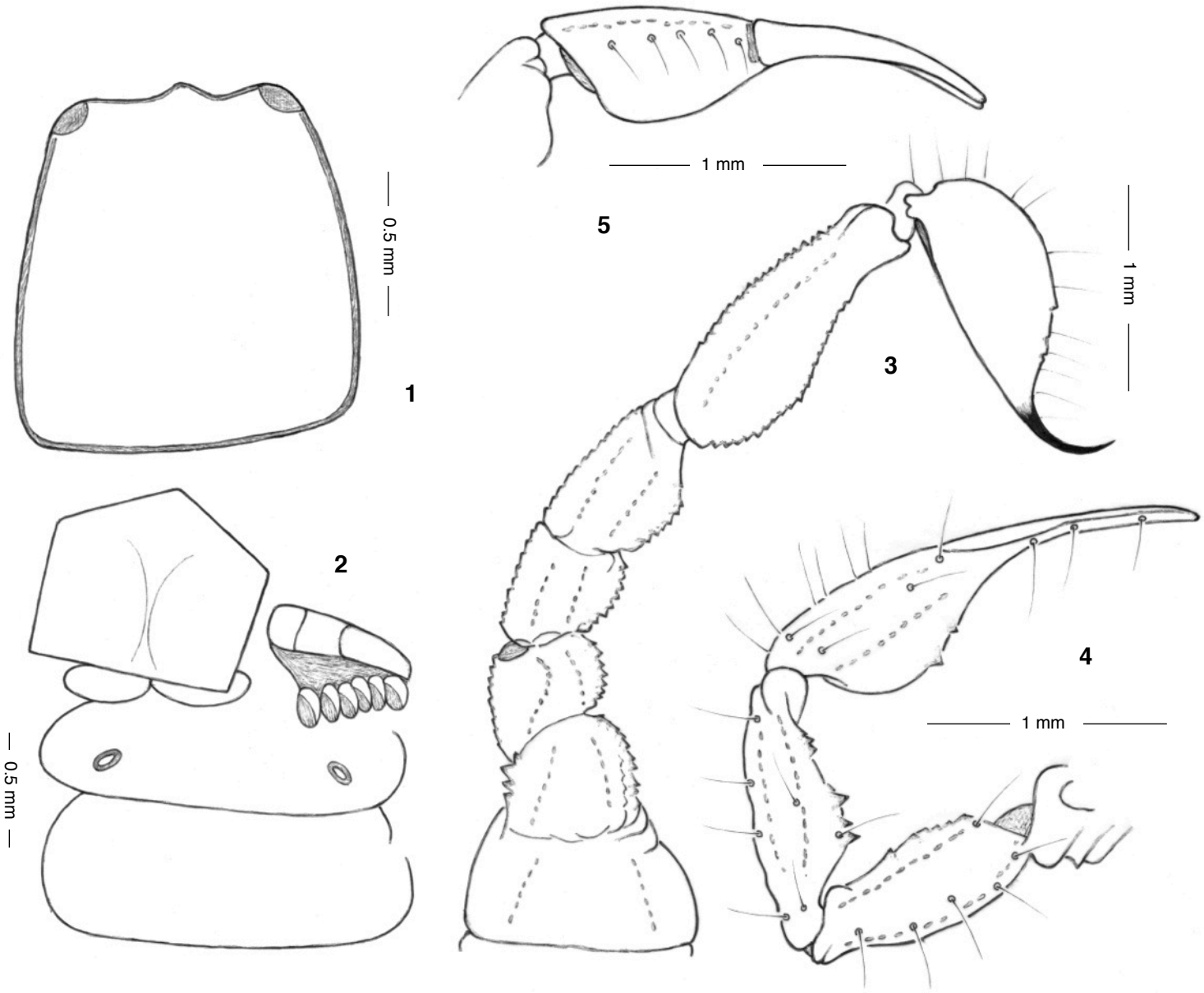


Fig. **1-5**. *Serratochaerilobuthus barbarae* **sp**. **n**. Adult male holotype.

1. Carapace, dorsal aspect. **2**. Ventral aspect showing the sternum, genital operculum, pecten and sternite with spiracles. **3**. Metasomal segments I to V and telson, lateral aspect, showing serrulas and strong spination. **4**. Left pedipalp, dorsal aspect showing the trichobothrial pattern. **5**. Right pedipalp chela, ventral aspect, showing trichobothria.

In their recent analysis, Xuan et al. (2025) remain critical of our descriptions and illustrations, yet their identifications are largely based on these same sources. As they stated:

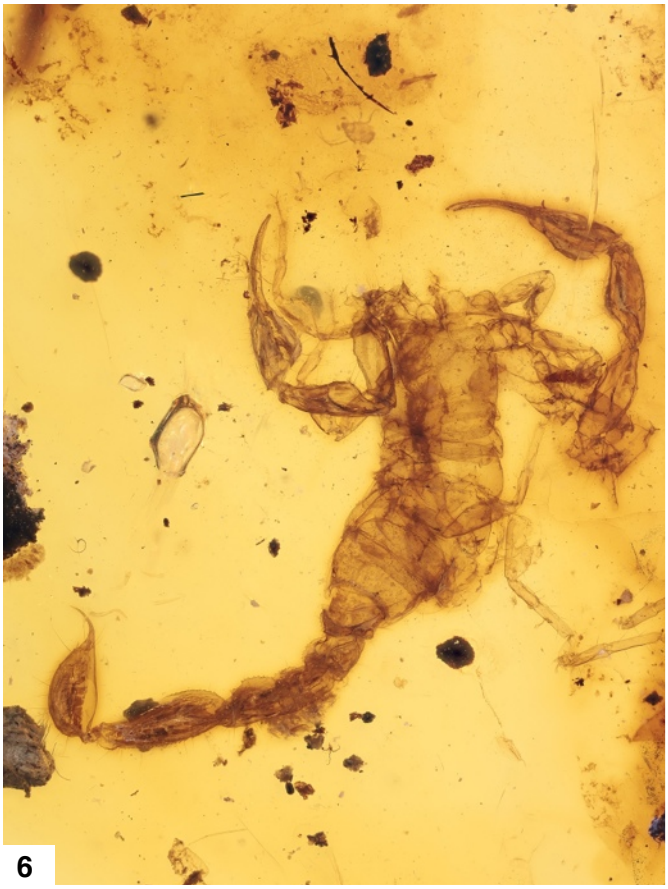
"The type material of previously described species was not examined as most specimens are in private collections. However, the published descriptions and images were carefully reviewed, allowing relevant data (measurements and discrete characters) from the type specimens to be included in the analyses so as to rigorously test their placement relative to the new material".

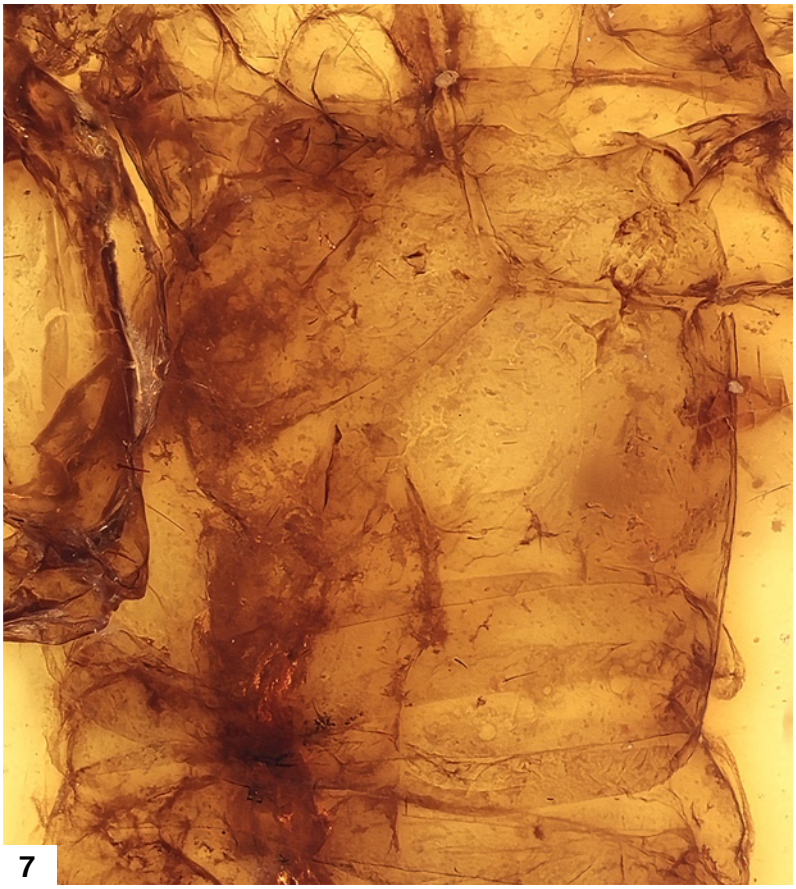
They tentatively assigned 11 described and illustrated specimens to 7 of the 16 species of *Chaerilobuthus*. However, given the ambiguity of their approach, their error rate may be quite high.

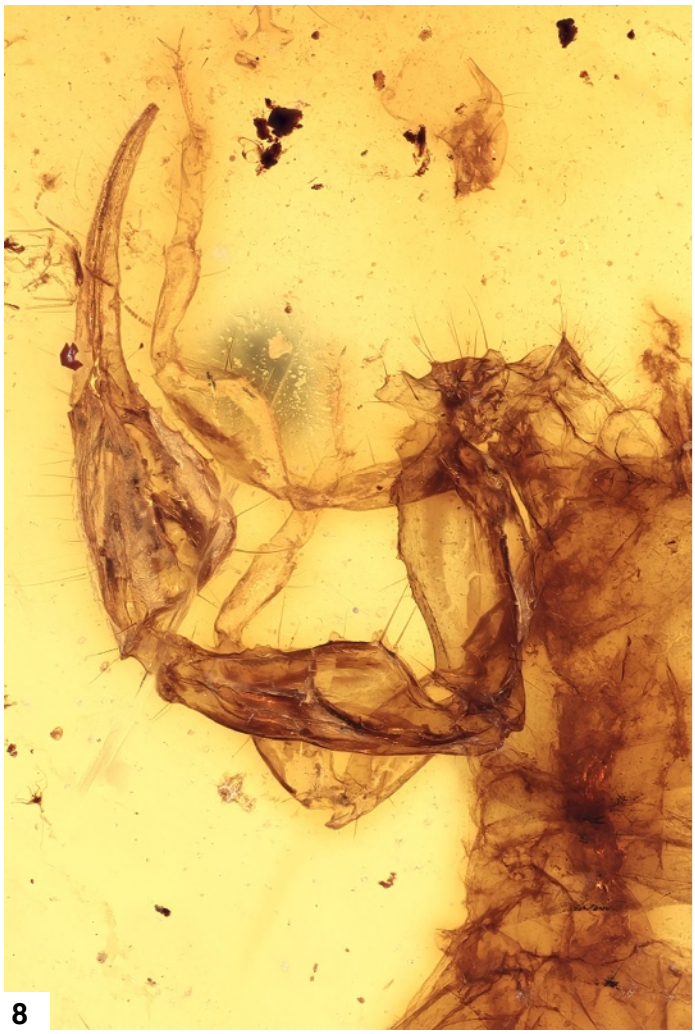
Xuan et al. (2025) also argue that our previous diagnoses of *Chaerilobuthidae* genera and species are unreliable, primarily because they were based on immature specimens. However, this argument applies to all Burmite specimens described by other authors. In fact, the majority of scorpions trapped in resin are juveniles, as adults are more likely to escape before becoming ensnared.

Xuan et al. (2025) argue that a more thorough examination of our published descriptions and images provided more relevant data, but this claim seems highly speculative. Even high-quality photographs, such as those produced by A. Beigel (see Lourenço & Velten, 2024a,b), do not capture all relevant morphological details. Such details can only be observed after extensive study under a binocular microscope and are often best documented through line drawings, which Xuan et al. (2025) once again dismiss as unreliable. Xuan et al. (2025) advocate for alternative techniques, which, however, do not significantly improve the resolution of most morphological characters.

Two previously described genera of *Chaerilobuthidae*, *Chaeriloiurus* Lourenço, 2020, and *Serratochaerilobuthus* Lourenço, 2024, were also synonymized with *Chaerilobuthus* by Xuan et al. (2025). Here, we restore both genera as valid







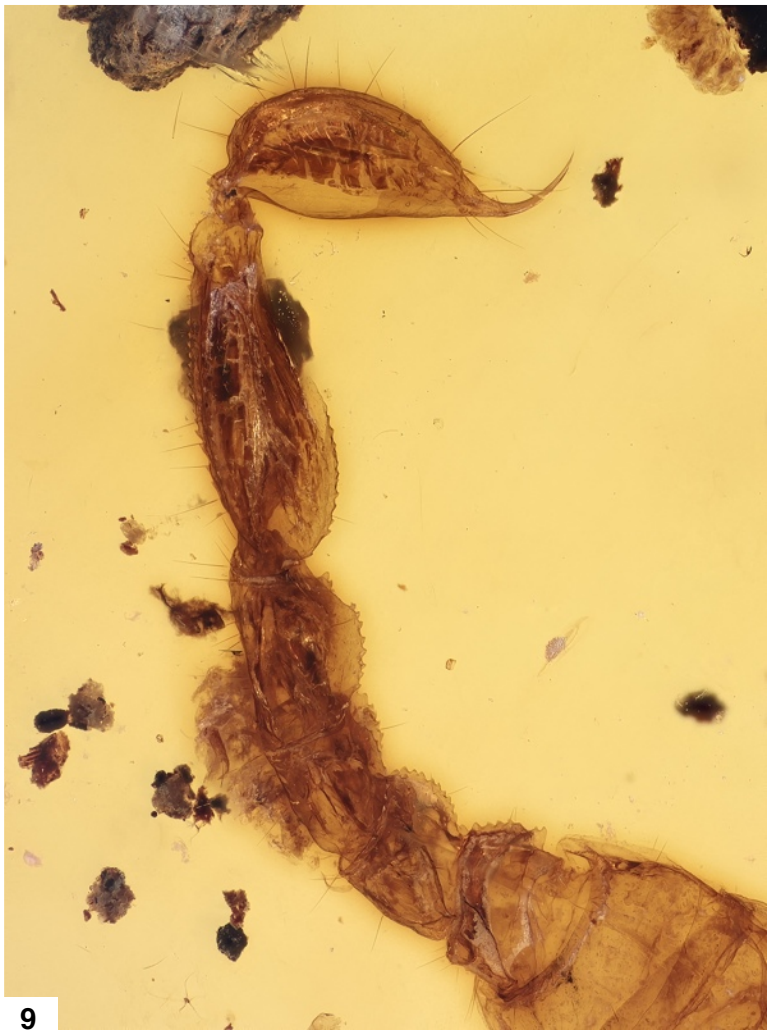


Fig. **6-9**. *Serratochaerilobuthus barbarae* **sp**. **n**. Adult male holotype.
6. Habitus, dorsal aspect. **7**. Carapace, dorsal aspect. **8**. Left pedipalp, dorsal aspect. **9**. Metasoma and telson, dorso-lateral aspects.

based on counterarguments that were overlooked by Xuan et al. (2025).

Xuan et al. (2025) did not acknowledge that *Chaeriloiurus* is currently considered an *incertae familiae* genus (Lourenço & Velten, 2024b) and is no longer definitively placed within *Chaerilobuthidae*. Further investigations on new specimens of this genus will be necessary to clarify its position.

Similarly, the diagnostic characters defining *Serratochaerilobuthus* were dismissed by Xuan et al. (2025). In particular, the most reliable feature -the presence of an extra trichobothrium on the ventral face of the chela- as rejected on the grounds that it is not supported by photographic evidence. As they did not examine the holotype, they suggested that this feature is likely a misinterpreted macro-or-microseta. However, this character has now been confirmed for the second described species of *Serratochaerilobuthus* in the present study.

It seems apparent that many of the taxonomic decisions made by Xuan et al. (2025) attempt to downplay previous findings by challenging their classification. This approach has been observed in previous cases, and Lourenço (2016) previously noted that some authors tend to gain recognition by challenging prior taxonomic work rather than conducting thorough reassessments.

In rare instances, the original type material is re-examined, but critiques often rely exclusively on published descriptions rather than direct examination of specimens. Given the rarity of fossil specimens, the limited available information makes re-evaluation inherently difficult. As a result, it remains uncertain how reliable such re-evaluations are when based solely on the same published descriptions.

As previously noted by Lourenço (2016), it is ironic that some researchers highlight their findings by challenging prior work, often without conducting the detailed taxonomic studies necessary for robust conclusions. This ultimately undermines rigorous taxonomic methodology.

The main focus, however, of the study by Xuan et al. (2025) is to demonstrate the phylogenetic relationships between the extant family *Pseudochactidae* Gromov, 1998, and the fossil family *Chaerilobuthidae* from the Cretaceous. They propose a sister-group relationship between the extinct *Chaerilobuthidae*, which they reclassify as a subfamily, and *Vietbocapinae*, an extant subfamily found in Southeast Asia.

In principle, we do not fundamentally oppose this proposition, but we believe that the placement of these familial and subfamilial elements needs reconsideration, particularly in light of previous taxonomic decisions by Prendini et al. (2021), with which we disagree. Mainly, the association between extant and fossil taxa could be more precisely interpreted on the basis of a broader superfamilial unit, such as *Buthoidea*, which has already been used to classify other Cretaceous fossil elements - specifically, *Palaeoburmesebuthidae* Lourenço, 2015, from Burmite amber and *Archaeobuthidae* Lourenço, 2001, from Lebanese amber (Lourenço, 2001, 2015).

Under this new classification, we elevate *Pseudochactidae* Gromov, 1998, to superfamily status as *Pseudochactoidea* Gromov, 1998. Likewise, we raise *Vietbocapinae* Lourenço, 2012, to family rank as *Vietbocapidae* Lourenço, 2012.

Due to the unsupported arguments used by Prendini et al. (2021) to establish *Troglokhammouaninae* and the genus *Aemngvantom*, we synonymize *Troglokhammouaninae* with *Pseudochactidae* Gromov, 1998, and *Aemngvantom* with *Vietbocap* Lourenço & Pham, 2010.

A detailed reassessment of species within *Pseudochactidae* and *Vietbocapidae* will be provided in a future study.

The following synopsis summarises the modifications proposed for the composition of the superfamily **Pseudochactoidea** Gromov, 1998.

Pseudochactoidea Gromov, 1998

Pseudochactidae Gromov, 1998
= Troglokhammouaninae Prendini, Ehrenthal & Loria, 2021, syn. nov.

Type genus: *Pseudochactas*, Gromov, 1998
Troglokhammouanus Lourenço, 2007
Qianxie Tang, 2022 (*dubius*)

Vietbocapidae Lourenço, 2012 stat. nov.

Type genus: *Vietbocap*, Lourenço & Pham, 2010
= *Aemngvantom* Prendini, Ehrenthal & Loria, 2021, syn. nov.

Chaerilobuthidae Lourenço & Beigel, 2011

Type genus *Chaerilobuthus* Lourenço & Beigel, 2011
Serratochaerilobuthus Lourenço, 2024, restored from synonymy
Chaeriloiurus Lourenço, 2020 (*incertae familiae*)

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Bibliographic work. – WL
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Résumé

Lourenço W. R. & Velten J., 2025. – Description d'une deuxième espèce pour le genre *Serratochaerilobuthus* Lourenço, 2024 (Scorpiones : Chaerilobuthidae). *Faunitaxys*, 13(10): 1 – 6.

Une nouvelle espèce est décrite pour le genre *Serratochaerilobuthus* Lourenço, 2024. La description de cette nouvelle espèce apporte un soutien supplémentaire à la validité du genre et confirme en même temps que la famille des Chaerilobuthidae est un des groupes les plus riches en espèces, parmi ceux déjà connus de l'ambre Crétacé du Myanmar.

Mots-clés. – Scorpiones, Chaerilobuthidae, *Serratochaerilobuthus*, *barbarae*, taxonomie, nouvelle espèce, description, variabilité, Ambre Birman.

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Faunitaxys

Volume 13, Numéro 10, Février 2025

SOMMAIRE

Description d'une deuxième espèce pour le genre *Serratochaerilobuthus* Lourenço, 2024 (Scorpiones : Chaerilobuthidae).

Wilson R. Lourenço & Jürgen Velten ..... 1 – 6

CONTENTS

Description of a second species for the genus *Serratochaerilobuthus* Lourenço, 2024 (Scorpiones: Chaerilobuthidae).

Wilson R. Lourenço & Jürgen Velten ..... 1 – 6

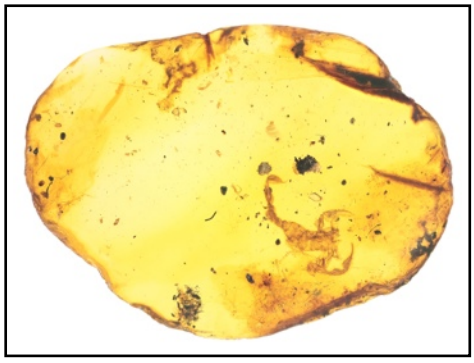

Illustration de la couverture :

Serratochaerilobuthus barbarae **sp**. **n**., in stone. Habitus, dorsal aspect.

Crédits:

Wilson R. Lourenço : Fig. 1-5.

Alexander Beigel : Fig. 6-9 & couverture.

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